

Central Intelligence Agency



Washington, D.C. 20505

4 February 1988

Mr. Donald E. Silies  
Virginia Department of Transportation  
3565 Chain Bridge Rd.  
Fairfax, VA 22030

Dear Mr. Silies:

On 29 January, your department installed two new traffic control signs at the dual right turn lanes exiting from the CIA compound onto westbound Route 123. The sign alongside the right dual lane reads "YIELD," and the sign alongside the left dual lane reads "STOP HERE ON RED." As I understand it from Mr. Doug Barnett, the intent of VDOT is for vehicles exiting from CIA onto Route 123 to make a right turn on red from the right dual lane after coming to a full stop. Vehicles exiting from the left dual lane are to stop on a red light and not proceed until the light changes to green.

In my opinion, the recently installed signage does not properly communicate the intent of VDOT as explained by Mr. Barnett. For example, I understand a "YIELD" sign to indicate that I must give way to oncoming traffic; and if there is no oncoming traffic, I may proceed without coming to a full stop. The "STOP HERE ON RED" sign clearly requires me to stop; but it does not indicate that I cannot turn right on red after stopping (which is generally the case in Virginia). We are aware from observing the intersection and from discussions with Agency employees that many of our employees are confused regarding the intent of this signage. I believe it is only a matter of time until this confusion results in an accident at this intersection. Therefore, in the interest of safety, I ask that you replace our current signage with signage which more clearly reflects the intent of VDOT.

I would like to call your attention to a similar intersection at Routes 7 and 606 in Reston. Northbound traffic on Route 606, intersecting with eastbound traffic on Route 7, is controlled by separate right and left lane signs. They indicate that the right lane can, and the left lane cannot, make a right turn on red onto Route 7. I believe that this type of signage is more easily understood than what we currently have. And, a large sign that indicates, "RIGHT TURN ON RED FROM RIGHT LANE ONLY" might be even better.

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Please let us know what action you plan to take regarding the problem I have outline above. If you have any questions, please contact

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Chief, New Building Project Office

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